

Mahals in Sarkar Lakhnau.—By H. R. NEVILL.

[Read March, 1904].

In the Journal for 1884, p. 215, there appeared an article by Mr. J. Beames entitled—"On the Geography of India in the Reign of Akbar," in which he dealt with the mahals and sarkars of the Subah of Avadh, as recorded in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. In this he identified the great majority of the mahals with the parganas of the present day, and thereby provided the student of fiscal geography with a mass of valuable information. His list was admittedly imperfect, and he invited others to complete the work he had begun. Moreover, it was not correct in all points. By referring to the original authorities and by consulting others, I think that many of the gaps can be filled up and one or two discrepancies removed. At present, I am merely able to deal with the Sarkar of Lakhnau; but it will be something accomplished if we can be fairly sure of the identification of the mahals of this sub-division which in Akbar's day numbered 54.

The district of Unao is the most difficult. It now contains twenty-one parganas, and four of these have double names, which imply a later reduction of a former larger number. On page 230 of Vol. liii of the Journal, Mr. Beames states that Unchganw with Tara Singhaur and Sidhupur is now the pargana of Daundia Khera, the cradle of the Bais clan. This assertion is apparently taken from Mr. A. F. Millett's Settlement Report of Sultanpur, p. 119, where it says that Rao Mardan Singh, an ancestor of Ram Baksh Singh, of mutiny notoriety, united these three mahals into one. Mr. Millett refers to Mr. Benett's "Clans of the Roy Bareilly District," but in that work I can find no reference to Tara Singhaur whatever. The same statement occurs in Major MacAndrew's Settlement Report of Rai Bareli, an earlier work than either the Sultanpur report, or the Oudh Gazetteer. When Sir C. A. Elliott wrote his "Chronicles of Oonao," Daundia Khera was still in Rai Bareli; but I am not satisfied that the report on the latter district was the ultimate authority, for the article on Daundia Khera in the old

Oudh Gazetteer states that the pargana was made out of Unchganw, Sidhupur, and Targaon, not Tara Singhaur. I cannot discover who was the author of this article: it certainly was not Mr. Maconochie, who was practically responsible for the whole of the article on the Unao district. There must be an earlier source, for Targaon is obviously incorrect, as no such mahal is recorded in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Be that as it may, I believe Tara Singhaur to be a mistake. On the banks of the Ganges, some seventeen miles south-east in a direct line from Daundia Khera, lying in latitude $26^{\circ}3'$ north and longitude $80^{\circ}53'$ east, is a village called Singhaur Tara, which must represent the headquarters of the old mahal. It is too far from Daundia Khera for the amalgamation, not only because it was a very small mahal, containing only 9,357 *bighas* of cultivation, but also for other reasons which will appear later. We know the position of Unchganw, and that mahal was fairly large, and with the addition of a portion of Sidhupur, which is also known, is quite sufficient for Daundia Khera.¹

Adjoining Daundia Khera on the south-east, and occupying the corner of the Rai Bareli district, is the large pargana of Sareni, with a present area of 72,880 acres. This was never identified by Mr. Beames with any of the Akbari mahals. One of these, described as "not traceable," was known as Kahanjara: it was held by Bais, who contributed 100 horse and 2,000 foot. Its cultivated area was 22,300 *bighas* or, say, 14,000 acres. Now the village of Khanjar or Kahenjar still exists, and it is a matter of common local knowledge that this place gave its name formerly to the pargana of Sareni, or at least to a part of it. It is a fairly large village in the north of the pargana, situated in latitude $26^{\circ}11'$ north and longitude $80^{\circ}49'$ east; and contains several *kheras*, evidence of older sites and vanished importance. This settles one mahal untraced by Mr. Beames: it marched with Sidhupur and Satanpur on the north-west and north-east respectively. It is no new discovery, for the fact is clearly stated in the Rai Bareli Report.

In Mr. Beames' list I find a mahal called Lashkar, on which he remarks: "Said to be Nisgarh, which is said to be a well-known village; the position, however, is not stated." The 'said' refers to Mr. Millett, who writes that Nisgarh is in Rai Bareli and is still a well-known village. No other remarks are made. But Nisgarh is perfectly well-known in pargana Sareni: it lies on the banks of the Ganges in latitude $26^{\circ}6'$ north and longitude $80^{\circ}46'$ east, and is quite a large village. Its position is about half-way between Tara Singhaur and

¹ Sidhupur, often spelt Serhupur, is a small village in Daundia Khera, on the north side of the old fort.

Daundia Khera, and this renders it impossible to suppose that the former and Unchganw could have been united to form the Daundia Khera pargana. It was a small mahal, with 16,794 *bighas* of cultivation; it was held, of course, by Bais, who contributed no less than 2,000 infantry.

Another untraced mahal is Deorakh. This was obviously in Baiswara, from the fact that it was in the possession of Bais. The military contingent was 100 horse and 1,500 foot, and the area 13,340 *bighas* of cultivation. Now, Mr. Millett says Deorakh was in Lucknow: wherefore, I know not. In the Rai Bareli Report I find "Sareni...was formed by the amalgamation...of Daoruk and Khanjur,...the former was the name of a hamlet now called Daorahhar." This ought to be good enough.¹ We may safely take it as the central portion of the pargana, south of Kahanjara, north-east of Nisgarh and north-west of Tara Singhaur. These four mahals had a total cultivated area in Akbar's day of 61,791 *bighas*, or roughly 38,600 acres, which is none too much, as in 1,902 there were nearly 42,000 acres under the plough in the whole of Sareni. Moreover, it is probable that Tara Singhaur, which is in the extreme south-east of Sareni, probably extended into the adjoining present pargana of Dalmau.

Another untraced Bais mahal of Mr. Beames' list is Haihar, with its 13,109 of *bighas* cultivation. He writes merely "not traceable." Now Mr. Millett says clearly that it is in Rai Bareli and that Haihar, or Aihar, still gives its name to a small estate. He might have gone even further and referred to the Rai Bareli Report, in which there is the detailed *jamabandi* of this identical village given as a specimen. It was still held by Bais *pattidars*. The village is a very large one: it lies in the north-west of pargana Dalmau, four miles east of Lalganj on the road to Rai Bareli.

Kumbhi was a mahal of sarkar Lakhnau. Sir Charles Elliott in his "Chronicles of Oonao," p. 67, gives it as one of the 22 Bais parganas, and yet Mr. Millett places it in Bara Banki. For what reason, I cannot imagine. There is a village of this name in pargana Kumhrawan of Rai Bareli, but this must be discarded, as that part of the district was in the sarkar of Manikpur. I cannot find any village of Kumbhi in Unao, but I feel sure that this small mahal with its 5,940 *bighas* of cultivation may easily be fitted into the Purwa tahsil of that district; and there is room for it in pargana Mauranwan.

There is only one other 'untraceable' mahal of the Sarkar in Mr. Beames' list, and this is Pingwan. He writes: "Pingwān or *Bangwān*

¹ Deorahar is a hamlet of Raipur, a village two miles south of Sareni.

I cannot find anywhere." The italics are my own. Mr. Millett says 'Bangawan' and places it in Sitapur. There is a village of this name in the Sadarpur pargana, of Sitapur, and this may do very well. The proprietors were Bais, but this clan has many colonies in Sitapur. Sadarpur was in the Khairabad Sarkar, but the boundaries have changed since, and we can find room for Bangwān in the north of pargana Fatehpur of Bara Banki. I am afraid I can offer no more convincing solution.

Turning from construction to correction, I may first tarry in Bara Banki to point out that Dadrah, which, according to Mr. Beames, "appears to account for a portion of the blank space in the Bara Banki district not covered by any name in the Ain," is a village in the Nawabganj pargana, a recent creation of the Nawabi Government. The blank space in question consists of Nawabganj and Partabganj, and these may well be divided between Dewa, a very large mahal, and Dadrah. The remaining notes concern Unao again. Mr. Beames states that Saron was the old name for Sikandarpur. This is a mistake arising from a somewhat natural confusion. It should be Sarosi, but this, however, was not the old name of any village, but a place which still is well-known and stands about a mile east of Sikandarpur, giving its name to a Parihar taluqa. Saron, on the other hand, is obviously the modern Sarwan, a village of great antiquity in the north of pargana Mauranwan. I see that Mr. Beames gives it its proper position in the map that accompanied his paper.

This clears up the whole of the sarkar, which can now be reconstituted with a close approach to certainty. The parganas have for the most part retained their old names, and the exceptions are due either to the self-glorification of the later Oudh officials or else to the division of one mahal into two, as, for example, pargana Pariar in Unao formed out of Sarosi, or the amalgamation of small units into a single large area, as in the case of Sareni. Historically, the matter is of much importance; for in Oudh above all other parts of the United Provinces the mahals and parganas correspond with the areas under the sway of particular chieftains and clans.
